WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED AND UNSTARRED QUESTIONS SET FOR THURSDAY, THE 15TH NOVEMBER, 2007*

New Sports Policy

*1. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA: Will the Minister of YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated a new sports policy taking into consideration the poor infrastructure for the development of Indian sports, particularly hockey, football, wrestling and kabaddi etc. at the grass-root level;

(b) if so, the details thereof, indicating the share of Central assistance to be provided to the States for the purpose; and

(c) if the new sports policy has not so far been formulated, by when that is likely to be done?

THE MINISTER OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. At the instance of the Cabinet, the Ministry has framed a draft Comprehensive National Sports Policy which has also been posted on its website since 26th July, 2007. The draft policy takes into account the best international practices for the comprehensive development of sports, keeping our requirements and priorities in mind. Appropriate steps shall be taken under the Panchayat Yuva Krida Aur Khel Abhiyan (PYKKA), where 'in principle' approval has been received from the Planning Commission to provide for the development of sports infrastructure at the Panchayat level. The Planning Commission have indicated a tentative allocation of Rs. 1500 crores for PYKKA for the Eleventh Plan period against the requirement of Rs. 2,526 crore projected by the Ministry. The total requirement projected over the Eleventh and Twelfth Plan periods is Rs. 6,188 crore. The Scheme is proposed to be implemented through the State Governments.

One element of the draft policy is the question of shifting 'Sports' from the State to the Concurrent List in the expectation that this would facilitate Central assistance for the sports infrastructure in the States, which was suspended from 01.04.2005 except for completing commitment already made. This is being reviewed in the context of the Eleventh Plan. The Financial allocation for the implementation of the new Policy will follow the adoption of the draft by the Cabinet.

(c) Consultations with all stakeholders on the draft Policy have been completed and, based on the inputs received, the draft is being finalized for submission to the Cabinet.

Nuclear Deal

*2. SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether our agreement on nuclear deal is being implemented by Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken so far by Government in this direction?

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*The sitting of Rajya Sabha on Thursday, 15th November, 2007 was adjourned as a mark of respect to the memory of the departed Shri Jana Krishnamurthy K., a sitting member. Answers to questions put down in the lists for that day were laid on the Table of the House on Monday, the 19th November, 2007.

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) India and the USA have agreed on the text of a bilateral 'Agreement for Cooperation between the Government of India and the Government of the United States of America Concerning Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy'. The finalised text has been released to the public on August 3, 2007 and a statement in this regard has been made by PM in Parliament on 13 August, 2007. The finalised text of the Agreement has received the approval of the Cabinet. As negotiated by India in the Agreement, India will complete the negotiation of an India specific safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The United States will work with Nuclear Suppliers Group to adjust their Guidelines to enable full civil nuclear energy cooperation and trade with India before it, as required by US law, takes the Agreement to the US Congress for its approval. Only after this can the bilateral Agreement be formally signed and enter into force for implementation by both sides.

River bridges in Orissa on NH-5(A)

*3. MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the river bridges on the NH-5(A) in Orissa State, have sounded a warning of possible collapse on account of heavy traffic; and

(b) if so, the details thereof, indicating *inter alia* the action plan of Government to strengthen all the river bridges on this highway to meet with the increased traffic?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R BAALU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) However, the rehabilitation of existing bridges on entire length of NH-5(A) between Chandhikhole and Paradeep have been taken up as a part of 4-laning work. The entire 4-laning work is scheduled for completion by June, 2008.

Highways taken up in Andhra Pradesh

*4. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the highways taken up during the last three years in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) the details thereof, highway-wise;

(c) the recommendations pending with the Union Government from the State Government of Andhra Pradesh; and

(d) the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) This Ministry is primarily responsible for the development of National Highways (NH) and the responsibility for the development of State Highways rests with the respective State Governments. As regards National Highways, details of development works sanctioned NH-wise in the last three years are given in the enclosed Statement (*See* below).